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MINISTRY OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

NOTIFICATION

New Delhi, the 3rd January 1955

No. Admn. 45(420)/54.—The President has learnt with deep regret of the death at 8-30 P.M. on Saturday the 1st January 1955, of Dr. Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar, D.Sc., F.R.S., F.N.I., Secretary to the Government of India, Ministry of Natural Resources and Scientific Research and Director, Scientific and Industrial Research and Chairman, University Grants Commission. On his passing away, India has lost an able and trusted public servant who had served his country with signal distinction in the scientific world.

Dr. Bhatnagar was born on the 21st February, 1894. After taking the M.Sc. degree from the Forman Christian College, Lahore, he went to England in 1919 and worked in collaboration with Prof. F. G. Donnan, who is wellknown for his theory of "Membrane Equilibria". He obtained his D.Sc. through the University College, London in 1921. On his return home he worked as Professor of Chemistry at Banaras Hindu University where he built up, in a very short time, a school of Physical Chemistry. In 1924 Dr. Bhatnagar joined the Punjab University as Professor of Physical Chemistry and Director, University Chemical Laboratories. His 16 years of stay at Lahore were marked by intensive activity in the field of research, particularly in the spheres of colloid chemistry, surface magneto and photo chemistry.

In 1940, soon after the outbreak of the second World War, the Government of India enlisted his services as Director of Scientific and Industrial Research. In spite of the heavy burden of routine administration Dr. Bhatnagar was able to devote enough time to research to develop processes of great importance and significance to industry.

It was given to Dr. Bhatnagar to fulfill the historic mission of realising the Prime Minister's vision of putting India on the scientific map of the world, and the result can be seen today in the 12 National Laboratories which have sprung up in rapid succession between the years 1950 and 1954.

These have laid the foundations of the country's scientific development in the field of fundamental research and applied. To translate the fruits of research into industrial terms he conceived the idea of a National Research Development Corporation which he was able to carry into early effect with the active assistance and support of the Prime Minister. His skill as a negotiator is evidenced by the agreements that have been concluded by the Government of India with three of the world's largest oil combines to establish up-to-date oil refineries in India. It was largely owing to him that a heavy media separation plant was installed in Madhya Pradesh by a leading mining concern for beneficiation of low grade manganese ore.

As Secretary of the Ministry of Education, which post he held on two occasions in addition to his other duties, he gave active support to proposals for the setting up of a School of Asian Languages in the Banaras Hindu University, raising the emoluments of University professors and teachers to attract men of the right calibre and increased financial assistance to Universities through the University Grants Commission of which he was appointed the first Chairman.

Dr. Bhatnagar's was a rich and diverse personality compounded of learning, scientific curiosity, a keen aesthetic sense and personal charm which won him a large circle of friends. He had the gift of organisation and of a quick and sound judgment. He will long be remembered for his signal service to the cause of science in India.

K. N. KAUL, Joint Secy.